

**Board of Selectmen**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 2, 2026**  
**Draft**

Present: James Bailey – Chairman, Selectwoman Iris Campbell, Richard Pelletier – Selectman, and Laura Buono, Town Administrator

Others present: Riche' Colcombe

Meeting opened at 2:00 pm

**1. 2026 BUDGET WORK SESSION**

- With the warrant articles and operating budget, the overall budget increase is showing a 3.68% increase which includes an extra payroll week in 2026. What adds to the lower percentage is a piece of equipment was paid off in the Fire Department and \$150,000 was removed for NH Retirement.
- Sidewalk tractor is estimated at \$50,000 per year for a 5-year lease. The actual cost is a little over \$208,000.
- Ms. Buono needs to find out if the town can enter into a lease agreement on equipment that won't be delivered for a couple of years. This is for new fire equipment that will take 2 years to build and costs \$1.5 million.
- The Board needs to further discuss the request from the Conservation Commission for \$10,000. There is currently \$270,000 in the conservation fund they could draw from and use instead of adding another \$10,000.
- The Board decided not to add to the infrastructure capital reserve this year but will begin to do so in 2027.
- Ms. Buono is recommending increasing the Elderly Exemption, she researched other communities and found Hillsborough is very low. Currently the income limit for a single person is \$30,000, for married people \$45,000 and assets in the amount of \$71,000 which do not include the home.
- Granite VNA is requesting a warrant article in the amount of \$18,000 for Hillsborough. This money will assist the VNA with the visits they do for Hillsborough residents that do not have insurance or the means to pay. There were 383 patients serviced in 2025. Riche' Colcombe said there is a medical services trust fund that could cover that expense. Selectman Pelletier recommended looking into the trust fund before making a final decision. Ms. Buono said that the account that Ms. Colcombe is talking about is listed by on the Trustee's financial report as a "scholarship" fund. Ms. Colcombe said there are 6 different purposes for this fund. She said there is \$13,385 available in the fund and the majority of that money will go towards High School Scholarships. The remaining money amounted to a couple thousand dollars that would be available to go towards the VNA request.
- Selectman Pelletier talked about the rate of inflation which is at 2.7% and the budget is at 3.68%, he feels the budget should be more in line with the rate of inflation. Ms. Buono reminded Selectman Pelletier that the budget includes an extra week of payroll, she will pull that cost out for an apples-to-apples comparison. Chairman Bailey said the increases every year are driven by contract increases and wages/benefit increases.
- Ms. Buono talked about the revenues and not knowing ahead of time any changes.

- The Assessor will meet with the Board at their next meeting to talk about assessments. This conversation will take place before the public hearing.
- The Board talked about how the State keeps reducing and keeps shifting down to municipalities and talked about how the school budget impacts the town as well.
- Selectman Pelletier would like to know how police coverage for Deering is going and would like a report.
- The Board would like to know from Deering if they will continue to use Grimes Field at a cost of \$25,000 for the year.
- The Board talked about the possible impact if Deering pulls out of Hillsborough's school system.

**2. HIGHWAY SAFETY GRANT**

The Selectboard, in a majority vote, had previously accepted the terms of the Highway Safety Grant Agreement in the amount of \$15,700.00 and had also previously accepted the terms of the Grant Agreement Amendment Notice in the amount of \$19,838.66 for an adjusted total grant limitation of \$35,538.66, and now the Selectboard, in a majority vote, is accepting the amended grant terms of the additional DUI enforcements funds as presented in the Grant Agreement Amendment Notice in the amount of \$4,000 for an adjusted total grant limitation of \$39,538.66. So moved by Chairman Bailey, seconded by Selectman Pelletier, majority vote, the motion passed.

**3. TRUSTEES OF THE TRUST FUNDS**

Trustee Riche' Colcombe and Ms. Buono talked about the importance of having information available to the public about the trust's funds.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm

A true record

Mary Whalen  
Recording Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by:  
Hillsborough Selectboard

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James C. Bailey, III, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Iris Campbell, Selectwoman

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Richard Pelletier, Selectman

